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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [CH](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: PREMIER WEN AND PM BROWN TALK ABOUT DALAI LAMA;
WEN DID NOT COMMIT TO MEETING

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Dan Piccuta. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

11. (S/NF) SUMMARY: UK PM Gordon Brown called Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao March 19 to inform the Chinese Government that Brown will meet the Dalai Lama in May, urge Chinese restraint in responding to protests and call for an end to the violence in Tibet. Brown also noted that the Dalai Lama had "met China's preconditions" for a direct meeting between the Dalai Lama and Chinese authorities, citing the Dalai Lama's statements against violence and independence for Tibet. According to a source who was on the call, Premier Wen had hedged in his reply and did not commit to a meeting, saying it would be necessary to look at the Dalai Lama's "actions" as well as his "words." At the regular Thursday MFA Press Conference March 20, the MFA spokesman went further, making clear that the preconditions for such a meeting have not yet been satisfied. END SUMMARY.

12. (S/NF) The DCM spoke with UK Charge D'Affaires, a.i. Barbara Woodward, who was in on the Brown-Wen March 19 phone call and had then sat next to the Premier the same night at a dinner with former Prime Minister Tony Blair. Woodward said PM Brown is "doing his best to pocket what is already on the table." (Comment: She is probably referring to matching various statements the Dalai Lama has made with demands Beijing has made separately to cement the impression that the two sides are not far apart.)

13. (S/NF) Woodward noted that the Dalai Lama sent a letter to PM Brown, in which he wrote that he is willing to talk to China, does not want to see a boycott of the Olympics and is not seeking independence for Tibet. PM Brown said that these statements mean that the Dalai Lama has already met the conditions for dialogue set by China, offering to facilitate that dialogue. Premier Wen did not say he is willing to meet the Dalai Lama during the conversation with PM Brown, Woodward stressed. Wen said "We have to look at what (the Dalai Lama) does, as well as what he says." Later, in a private meeting with former PM Blair after the dinner, the Premier and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi "came on very strong," using the "Dalai clique" and other similarly pejorative language, consistent with public Chinese statements in recent days.

14. (S/NF) MFA Spokesman Qin Gang used a nearly identical phrase in his response to questions on the same subject at the regularly scheduled MFA press conference March 20, but he went further in dampening expectations for a Wen-Dalai Lama meeting. Responding to Western reporters' questions regarding the Dalai Lama's having already fulfilled the preconditions for a meeting, Qin said that the current problems in Tibet such as "beating, smashing, looting and burning" were in fact masterminded by the "Dalai clique." "He is not as he himself says he is. There must be a

thorough review of his deeds. His actions prove that he has never stopped his words and deeds to split the motherland," Qin said.

15. (C) A UK Embassy PolOff told us separately March 20 that Brown told Wen that meeting now with the Dalai Lama, with no additional preconditions, would help create the best long-run solution for all parties, including the Tibetan people, and would help deflect international criticism in the run-up to the Olympics. The British Embassy official said that Wen's response was wholly along "standard lines" on Tibet, including a third, long-standing condition for talks with the Dalai Lama: that the Dalai Lama explicitly recognize Taiwan as a part of China. The UK diplomat did not see Wen's response as evidence of a possible upcoming meeting with the Dalai Lama.

16. (C) Coment: Regardless of whether PM Brown was putting words in the Premier's mouth, by phrasing the statement the way he did, he may be attempting to provide political cover to the UK and other European states who are deciding whether to meet the Dalai Lama during his visit to Europe in May. The aim may be to make it more difficult for China to inflict "consequences" on countries whose leaders meet the Dalai Lama, the way China did to Germany and Canada recently, given that the Dalai Lama, according to PM Brown at least, has already met China's preconditions. The news conference today was a case in point. The spokesman's efforts to condemn the UK decision to meet the Dalai Lama were diluted in part by the need to defend China's decision not to.

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